

What is Claimed is:

1. A method of disabling sound and/or visual display of a video program, the method comprising the steps of:

5 receiving a video signal including at least one rating code representing a program classification and at least one position code;

comparing the rating code with a predetermined program code; and

10 disabling the sound and/or blocking a subsection of the visual display of the video program in dependence on a result of the comparison and in accordance with the position code, the subsection being less than all of the visual display.

15 2. The method according to Claim 1, wherein the video signal is a television program.

3. The method according to Claim 2, wherein position code identifies the subsection of the visual display to be blanked.

20 4. The method according to Claim 2, wherein the rating code and the position code are received periodically and vary according to content contained within various segments of the video program.

25 5. The method according to Claim 1, further comprising the step of entering and storing the predetermined program code.

6. The method according to Claim 1, further comprising the step of extracting the rating code and the position code from the video signal using a data capture module.

5 7. An apparatus for controlling a video signal display system comprising:

 a data capture module arranged to extract a rating code and a position code from a video signal;

 a comparator that receives the rating code and compares
10 the rating code to a predetermined program code;

 a blanking circuit arranged to mute an audio portion and/or block a subsection of a visual display of the video signal in dependence on a comparison result from the comparator and the position code, the subsection being less than all of the visual
15 display.

 8. The apparatus according to Claim 7, wherein the data capture module forms part of a closed captioning system.

20 9. The apparatus according to Claim 8, wherein video signal is a television program and the rating code and the position code are extracted from line 21 of the vertical blanking interval.

25 10. The apparatus according to Claim 7, wherein the data capture module forms part of a teletext system.

 11. A television receiver comprising:

means for receiving a television signal including at least one rating code representing a program classification and at least one position code inserted in a vertical blanking interval;

means for extracting the rating code and the position code;

5 means for comparing the rating code with a predetermined program code; and

means for disabling sound and/or blocking a subsection of a visual display of the television program in dependence on a result of a comparison result from said comparing means and in
10 accordance with the position code, the subsection being less than all of the visual display.

12. The receiver according to Claim 11, wherein position code identifies the subsection of the visual display to be
15 blanked.

13. The receiver according to Claim 11, wherein the rating code and the position code are received periodically and vary according to content contained within various segments of the
20 television signal.

14. The receiver according to Claim 11, further comprising means for entering and storing the predetermined program code.

25 15. The receiver according to Claim 11, wherein said extracting means includes a data capture module and forms part of a closed captioning system.